

B-A3 Nightjar *Caprimulgus europaeus*

SPECIES STATEMENT

1. Current Status

- 1.1 The Nightjar is a summer visitor, spending the winter months in Africa. Its traditional habitat in the UK is lowland heathland, although in Wales (and Monmouthshire) the species is found mainly on clear felled areas of woodland, and those areas that have been replanted/restocked.
- 1.2 The Nightjar's nocturnal churring is now a regular feature of summer evenings in many of Monmouthshire's forest areas. Surveys over the last 20 years indicate that the species has been increasing and is currently at its highest population level. This is largely the result of extensive areas of clear fell/restock being available. Monmouthshire held an estimated 27 territorial males in 2004 (Lewis 2004), the birds were concentrated mainly in the Trelleck area (9 males) and the Monmouthshire parts of Wentwood (16 males).

2. Current factors causing loss or decline

- 2.1 None

However habitat succession and current/future forest practice are likely to cause decline through:-

- 2.2 Tree growth on the existing forest restocks, rendering them unsuitable as nesting habitat.
- 2.3 Changes in management practice with reduction in the extent of clear felling and a preference for continuous cover forest systems.
- 2.4 Changes in management practice with reversion of some conifer plantations to broadleaves (and the subsequent absence of clear felled areas).

3. Current action

- 3.1 This species is monitored nationally on a regular (approx 10 year) timescale.
- 3.2 In Monmouthshire, 2 extensive areas of heathland (14 ha and 36 ha) are being re-established in the Trelleck area (where former heathland was planted with conifers during the last century).

4. Target

- 4.1 Maintain the numbers that were recorded in 2005.

5. Proposed Action

- 5.1 Monitor the numbers present on the heathland sites - 3 year project finishing in 2010. Lead Partner: FCW.
- 5.2 Ensure areas of clear felling are regularly created to compensate for existing nesting areas that become unsuitable - ongoing project. Lead Partner: FCW

6. Links with other action plans

- Lowland Heathland
- Woodland

7. Reference

Lewis J., The National Nightjar Survey 2004, Gwent Bird Report No 40, 2004, p 5 & 6.